

System and Method for Providing an Open eMail Directory

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Abstract of the Disclosure

5 An eMail directory and forwarding service charge an eMail message sender a refundable sender's fee for each eMail message sent. The amount charged is specified by the recipient. The eMail directory allows an eMail message recipient to be located in a search by other users or commercial senders using biographical and affinity information voluntarily provided by the recipient in a profile database. Thus, based on his perception of the value of his time, the recipient may set his price for reading an eMail message. In turn, a sender (e.g.,
10 a commercial sender) can bid for the recipient's attention by paying the specified fee, or if the sender would like greater attention, a greater fee. A content search gateway collects information regarding a subscriber's search interests to include as affinity information in the profile database. Various information and email services are provided to foster an online community.